



15c

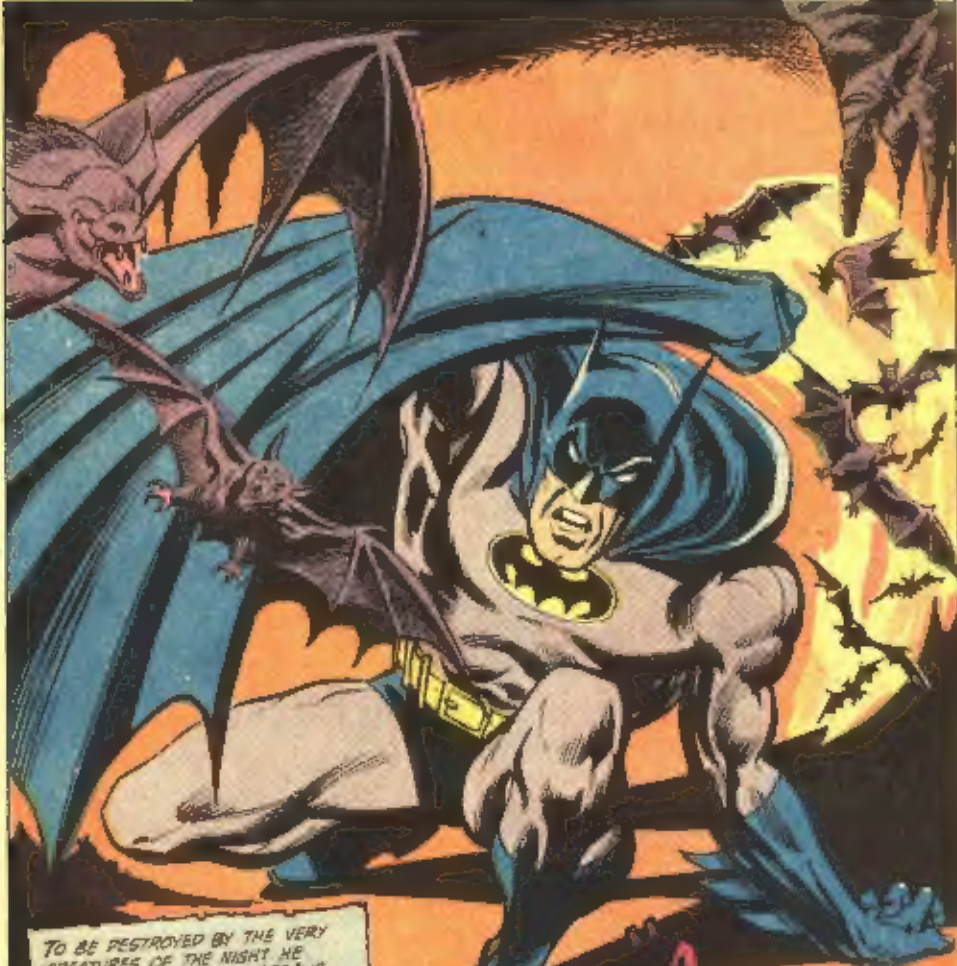


MAY  
NO. 221

# BATMAN



SEEK **BATMAN** OUT,  
MY PETS --  
AND **DESTROY** HIM!



TO BE DESTROYED BY THE VERY  
CREATURES OF THE NIGHT HE  
CHOSE TO EMULATE--BATS! IS  
THIS THE IRONIC FATE DECREED  
FOR THE CRUSADER WHO ADOPTED  
A BAT-PERSONA TO STRIKE  
FEAR INTO OPPONENTS'  
HEARTS?

BY THE VERY  
NIGHT HE  
TE--BATS! IS  
ATE DECREE  
ER WHO ADOPTED  
TO STRIKE  
NENTS."

A  
BAT-DEATH  
FOR BATMAN!"



IT WAS JUST ANOTHER TRANQUIL MORNING ON THE RHINE RIVER--A PATIENT FISHERMAN AND HIS SON WAITING THEIR FIRST BITE... AND THEN IT CAME.

MMMMEL-- WHAT HAVE I CAUGHT--?!

PULL IT IN--!

"INSTEAD, THE SURPRISED FISHERMAN WAS TANKED OVERBOARD..."

ACK-- SUCH STRENGTH!

"SUDDENLY THE PLACID CURRENT TURNED INTO A BOILING, DEVOURING TURBULENCE..."

IT PULLED HIM IN!  
DEVOURING HIM....!

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, HEALTH INSPECTOR ORPHEIN! PRANHAS IN THE RHINE?

HEH, HERR WAYNE-- COMMON RIVER TROUT! JUST AS COMMON...

"AS THE BRACE OF LETHARGIC OVEN THAT FARMER PLATT WAS WATERING ONE MORNING..."

"AND WHO MOMENTS LATER TURNED INTO-- KILLER BULLS!"

RRAM

THESE ARE TWO OF MANY INCIDENTS TOO GRUESOME TO DETAIL-- WHERE FORMERLY MEEK, TAKE ANIMALS VICIOUSLY TURNED ON THEIR MASTERS!

WE CHECKED --AND THIS MYSTERIOUS AILMENT IS NOT RABIES, HOOF-AND-MOUTH, NOR ANY OTHER DISEASE!

BUT IT'S TURNING "LAMBS" INTO "LAMS"! WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME ALL THIS?

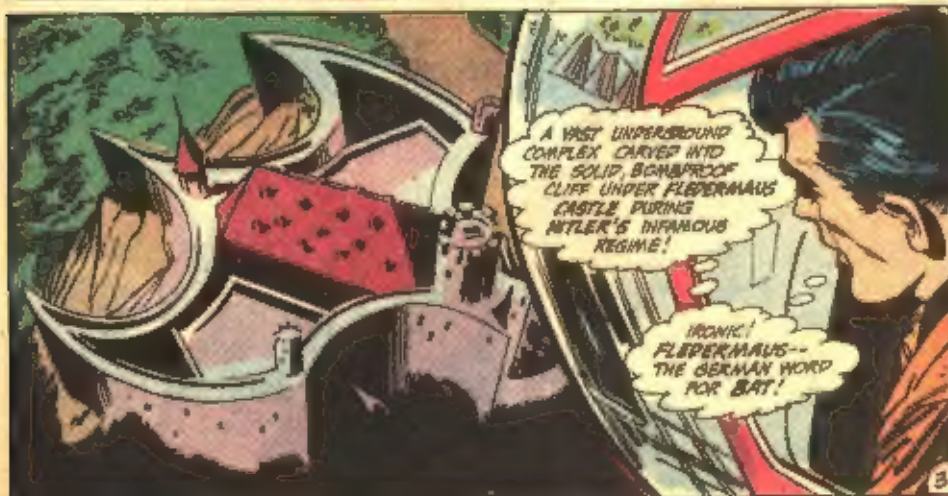
...WITH BARON WILLI VON RITTER, HEAD OF BIOCHEM-FABRIK, LTD! PRECISELY WHY I HAVE TAKEN THE LIBERTY TO DETAIN YOU HERE IN CUSTOMS!

WE HOPE THAT AS GUEST OF THE BARON, YOU CAN DISCOVER WHAT WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO!

A SHORT TIME LATER, BRUCE WAYNE IS ORIGINATED ALOFT IN THE BARON'S HELICOPTER...

THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR HAS GOOD CAUSE TO BE WORRIED!

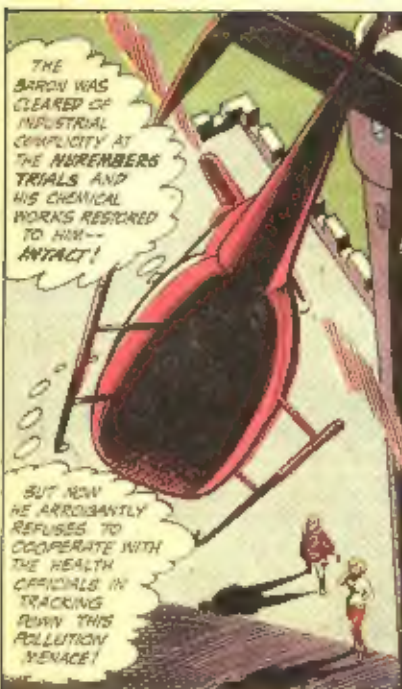
AN INVISIBLE, PERVERSIVE WATER POLLUTION, DEFIYING CHEMICAL ANALYSIS... AND YET IT DOES NOT OCCUR IN THE RIVER ABOVE THE BARON'S CHEMICAL WORKS!



A VAST UNDERGROUND COMPLEX CARVED INTO THE SOLID, BOMBPROOF CLIFF UNDER FLEPERMAUS CASTLE DURING HITLER'S INFAMOUS REGIME!

IRONIC! FLEPERMAUS-- THE GERMAN WORD FOR BAT!





THE  
BARRON WAS  
CLEARED OF  
INDUSTRIAL  
COMPLICITY AT  
THE NURENBERG  
TRIALS AND  
HIS CHEMICAL  
WORKS REDIRECTED  
TO HIM--  
INTACT!

BUT NOW  
HE ARROGANTLY  
REFUSES TO  
COOPERATE WITH  
THE HEALTH  
OFFICIALS IN  
TRACKING  
DOWN THIS  
POLLUTION  
MENACE!



IS HE HIDING SOME  
DEVILISH SECRET  
EXPERIMENT...OR IS  
HE BLAMELESS?  
MAYBE BRUCE  
WAYNE CAN'T  
FIND OUT--  
BUT BAT-  
MAN  
CAN!

ACH, HERR WAYNE!  
YOU MUST BE EX-  
HAUSTED FROM  
YOUR ORDEAL...



THOSE STUPID OFFICIALS!  
THEY ARE LIKE SOME  
SUB-HUMAN SPECIES...

NOT LIKE THE OLD  
SUPER-EFFICIENT,  
SUPER-HUMAN DRIS,  
EH, BARRON?

YOU JEST, JA,  
HERR WAYNE?  
PLEASE--MY  
WIFE, ALBA--

WE ARE  
HONORED!



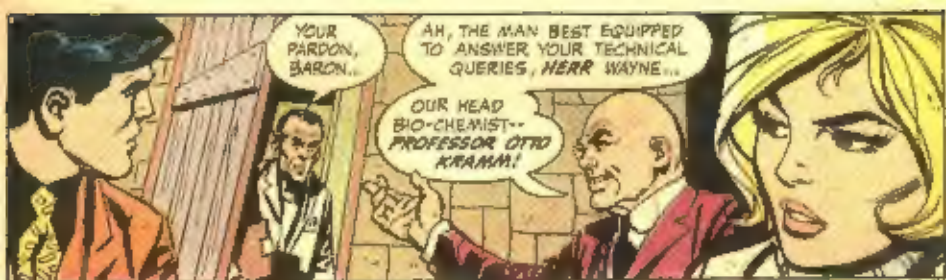
I SEE YOU'RE  
QUITE A HUNTER,  
BARRON...

I WAS--BUT  
NO MORE! I AM  
OLD AND...AHM...  
ALSO SO ARE  
THE WILD  
BEASTS!



ANOTHER RELIC OF YOUR  
TEMPESTUOUS YOUTH? A  
KEIPFELBERG DUELING  
OUTFIT...

JA, WE  
WERE MEN  
THEN! STILL I  
BEAR THIS  
BADGE OF  
MANHOOD--  
THAT NO ONE  
CAN TAKE  
FROM ME!



YOUR  
PARDON,  
BARON...

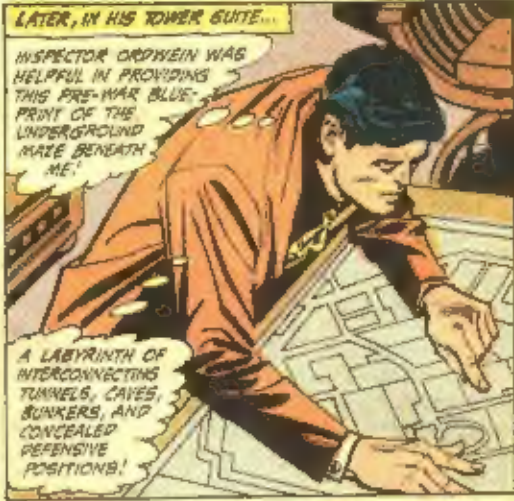
AH, THE MAN BEST EQUIPPED  
TO ANSWER YOUR TECHNICAL  
QUERIES, HERR WAYNE...

OUR HEAD  
BIO-CHEMIST--  
PROFESSOR OTTO  
KRAMM!



I WOULD BE MOST  
PLEASED AND  
HONORED! PERHAPS  
FIRST A TOUR OF  
OUR LABORATORIES?

AFRAID I'VE HAD  
ALL THE TOURING  
I NEED TODAY JUST  
GETTING HERE,  
PROFESSOR! IF IT  
COULD WAIT TILL  
MORNING--?



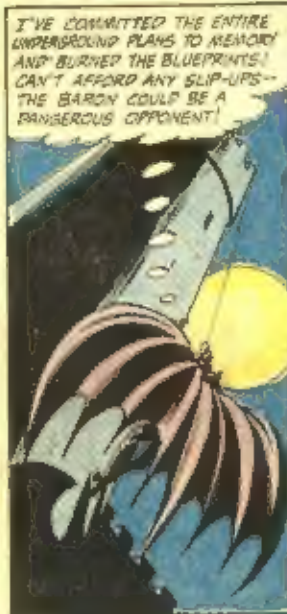
LATER, IN HIS TOWER SUITE...

INSPECTOR ORDWINE WAS  
HELPFUL IN PROVIDING  
THIS PRE-WAR BLUE-  
PRINT OF THE  
UNDERGROUND  
RAVE BENEATH  
ME!

A LABYRINTH OF  
INTERCONNECTING  
TUNNELS, CAVES,  
BUNKERS, AND  
CONCEALED  
DEFENSIVE  
POSITIONS!



THE SOONER  
EVERYBODY RETIRES,  
THE SOONER BATMAN  
CAN SPREAD  
HIS WINGS!



I'VE COMMITTED THE ENTIRE  
UNDERGROUND PLANS TO MEMORY!  
AND BURNED THE BLUEPRINTS!  
CAN'T AFFORD ANY SLIP-UPS--  
THE BARON COULD BE A  
DANGEROUS OPPONENT!



HE SURE GOT HIS  
PROPERTY BACK  
INTACT--COMPLETE  
DOWN TO WORLD  
WAR II ARTILLERY!



THAT WOULD-HUNGRY MANIAC,  
HITLER, SURE SET UP THINGS LIKE  
HE'D LIVE FOREVER!



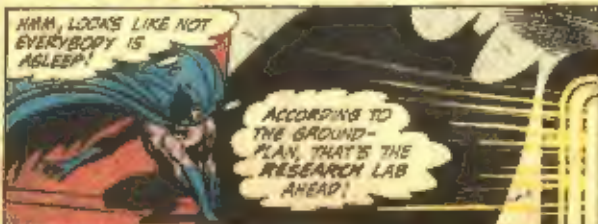
PROBABLY  
HAD HIS  
SLAVE-  
CHEMISTS  
RESEARCHING  
BIOLOGICAL  
WEAPONS...

...TO BE PRODUCED IN MIXING  
VATS LIKE THESE!



LUCKY  
WE GOT TO  
HIM FIRST!

HMM, LOOKS LIKE NOT  
EVERYBODY IS  
ASLEEP!



ACCORDING TO  
THE GROUND-  
PLAN, THAT'S THE  
RESEARCH LAB  
AHEAD!



LAB-TEST ANIMALS  
SLEEPING PEACEFULLY...

WHAT'S THAT BELLAM?  
SOUNDS LIKE--LIKE A RAGING  
LION AND A LAMB!



R-ROAR  
RAWR  
BAA-A  
BA-A!

STORY CONTINUES ON  
202 PAGE FOLLOWING!

*read...*  
**D.C.'s BEST**



ON  
SALE  
MARCH  
12th

# A Bat-Death FOR BATMAN PART II

AS BATMAN'S QUICK EYES TRACE THE SOURCE OF THE BLOOD-CURDLING SOUNDS TO A SECRET WALL-SECTION PARTLY A-ZAR...



STOP IT! HOW CAN YOU DO THIS TO-- A HELPLESS LAMB?

VAS IST? PER-  
AEPERMENSCH?



HELPLESS LAMB?  
LOOK FOR YOURSELF..!





UNDER BATMAN'S  
INCREDULOUS EYES,  
THE TRANSFORMED  
"GENTLE" LAMB  
STRIKES AT ITS  
COWERING FOE  
WITH THE  
SHATTERING FORCE  
OF A BATTERING  
RAM...



GREAT SCOTT! THE  
"KING OF BEASTS"  
DESTROYED BY  
A GENTLE  
LAMB!



JA, FLEPERMENSCH! BUT  
ACH, A PITY I CANNOT  
TURN A PLANT-EATER INTO  
A MEAT-EATER! HERE,  
VICTORIOUS ONE, YOUR  
REWARD-- FRESH  
ALFALFA!



WHAT  
HAVE YOU  
DONE?



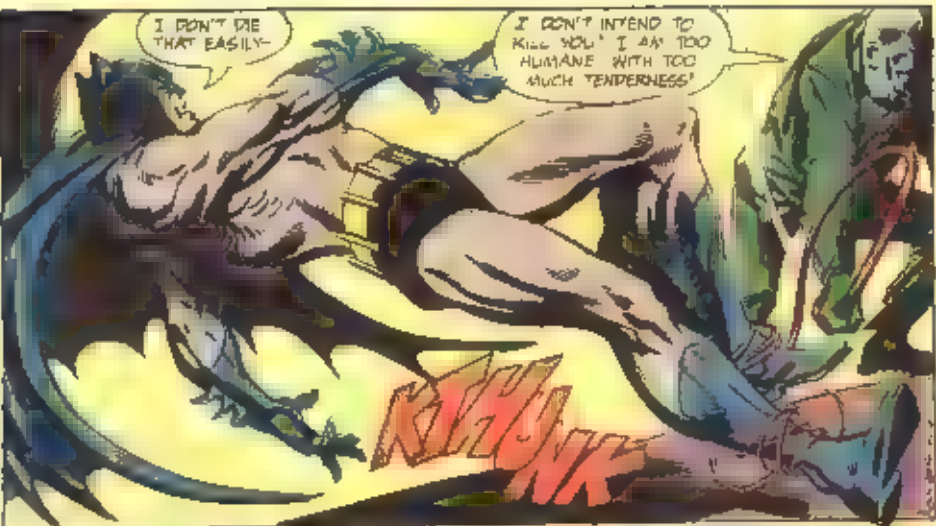
WHAT MANY HAVE TRIED  
TO DO BEFORE--AND  
FAILED! I HAVE SYN-  
THESIZED THE ESSEN-  
TIAL CHEMICAL ELEMENTS  
THAT TRIGGER THE  
KILLER INSTINCT  
IN PREDATORS...

...INFUSED IT  
INTO ALL MANNER  
OF GENTLE CREATURES--  
TRANSFORMING THEM INTO  
RAVENING BEASTS!





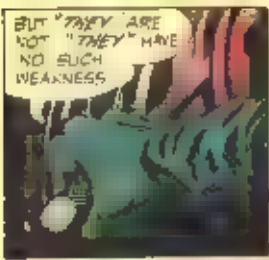




I DON'T DIE THAT EASILY-

I DON'T INTEND TO KILL YOU. I AM TOO HUMANE WITH TOO MUCH TENDERNESS!

KTHUNK



BUT "THEY" ARE NOT "THEY" HAVE NO SUCH WEAKNESS

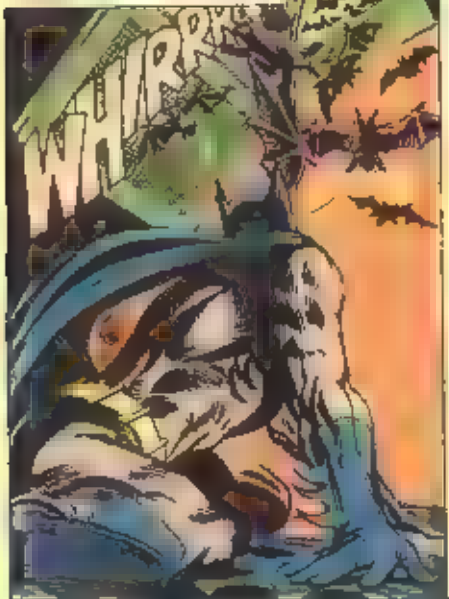
AS THE LEVER IS THROWN, A CEILING SCREEN SWINGS DOWN, FOLLOWED BY THE EERIE WHIR OF COUNTLESS LEATHER-LIKE WINGS



HEH, THEY ARE NOT VAMPIRES ONLY COMMON CAVE-BATS

BUT NOW POSSESSING THE FEAR RESPONSE, THE LIGHTNING ATTACK OF HUNTER FALCONS!

I FEAR I DO NOT HAVE THE STOMACH TO WATCH THIS BESIDES, I HAVE A MORE PRESSING APPOINTMENT



WHIRP

AS THE SECRET DOOR SLAMS SHUT LEAVING A  
HUBBLED BATMAN TO COPE WITH MOUNTAIN  
SELF GUIDED MISSILES.

NOT TO REGAIN  
MOBILE TO PREPARE  
STAND A CHANCE



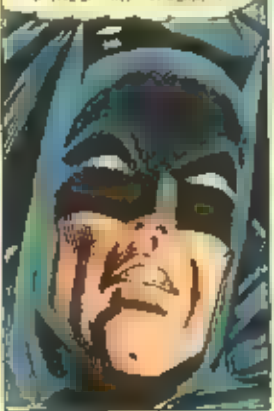
I COULD PLUNGE  
THE CAVE INTO  
COMPLETE DARKNESS  
BY SMASHING THAT  
BOMB BUT THAT WOULD  
ONLY MAKE A SITUATION  
WORSE

EVEN WITH THEIR  
WEAK EYES ASSISTED BY THE  
LIGHT THEY'RE NOT SEEING  
IN CYBERNETIC  
THEIR FUTURE  
SONAR



BY EMITTING HIGH PITCHED  
SOUND WAVE SENSITIVE  
EARS PICK UP THE ECHO  
SO A BIG BATA LIFE  
DEATH

LIKE RADAR, SONAR  
HIGH FREQUENCY RADIO  
WAVES TO DETECT  
PLANES AND MISSILES



FRENZIEDLY THE CAPED CRUISADER FIGHTS  
AGAINST OVERWHELMING ODDS AS THE TINY  
FURRED MENACES NIP AT HIM

UNOH! TO BE  
DESTROYED BY  
THE VERY  
CREATURES I  
CALLED  
BATTLE BATS!



RADAR SONAR - THE SAME  
PRINCIPLE USING DIFFERENT  
WAVE LENGTHS FOR ECHO  
DETECTION

THAT'S MY  
ONLY HOPE  
IF IT WORKS





MEANWHILE, SAFE INSIDE THE LAB--THE MYSTERIOUS PADDED FIGURE PREPARES FOR HIS PRESSING DATE...



"MY DELIVERED WILL BE HERE AT ANY MOMENT! I MUST GET THE SERUM READY."

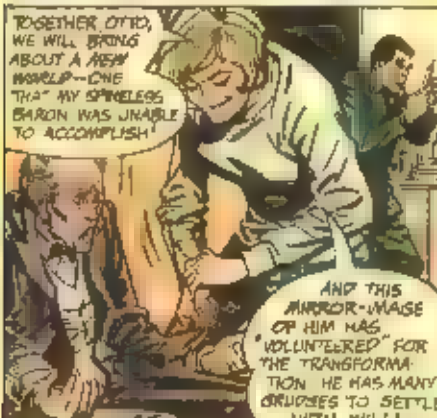
"OTTO--ARE YOU THERE? I BRING YOU OUR #1 GUINEA-PIG!"

"ZGA--ADORED ONE"



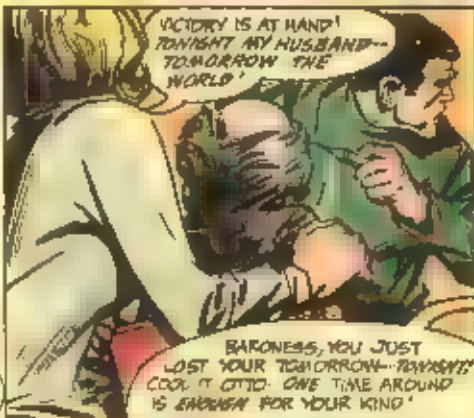
"IS THIS TO BE OUR FIRST PROTOTYPE SUPER-MENSCH? THIS FAWNING, CRINGING EXCUSE FOR A MAN?"

"WHAT BETTER CHOICE DEAR OTTO THAN MY HUSBAND'S WRET?"



"TOGETHER OTTO, WE WILL BRING ABOUT A NEW WORLD--ONE THAT MY SPINELESS BARON WAS UNABLE TO ACCOMPLISH!"

"AND THIS MIRROR-IMAGE OF HIM HAS 'VOLUNTEERED' FOR THE TRANSFORMATION. HE HAS MANY DRUGS TO SETTLE WITH WILL!"

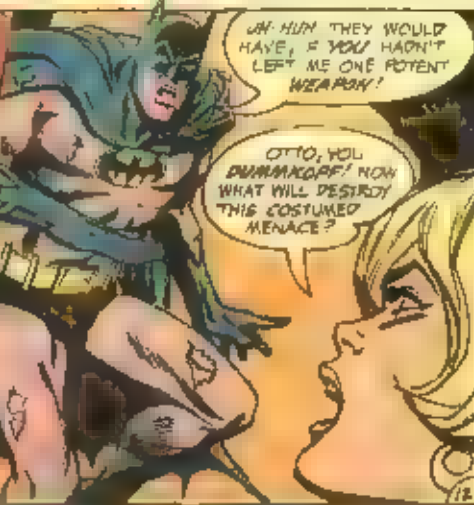


"VICTORY IS AT HAND! TONIGHT MY HUSBAND--TOMORROW THE WORLD!"

"BARONESS, YOU JUST LOST YOUR TOMORROW--TODAY! COOL IT OTTO. ONE TIME AROUND IS ENOUGH FOR YOUR KIND!"



"FLEDERMENSCH? BUT YOU SHOULD BE DEAD! THE KILLER-BATS."



"JH-HUN THEY WOULD HAVE, IF YOU HADN'T LEFT ME ONE POTENT WEAPON!"

"OTTO, YOU DUMMKOPF! NOW WHAT WILL DESTROY THIS COSTUMED MENACE?"

WE MUST HAVE A SUPER-CHAMPION TO DEFEND US. GIVE ME THAT SERUM.



THEN LIKE AN AVENGING WALKYRIE, ILGA STRIKES...

ACH-H-H!  
ME--ILGA?



JA, OTTO.  
YOU SHALL BE MY  
CHAMPION!

AS THE KILLER SERUM EATS AWAY THE PROTECTIVE BARRIERS OF OTTO'S "CIVILIZED" CONSCIOUSNESS...

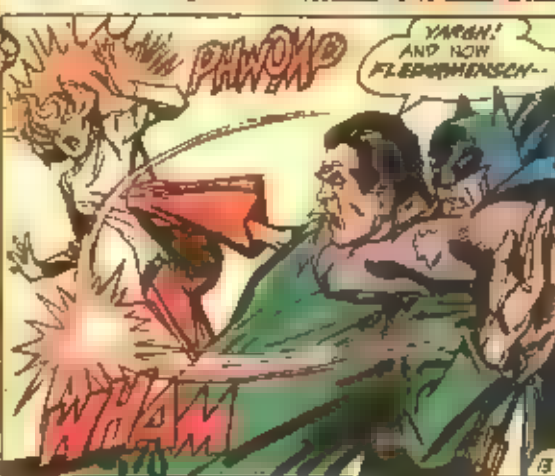


ACH-H-H!  
RAHR-RR!

MOMENTARILY ENJOYING THE THREAT OF BATMAN - THE TRANSFORMED OTTO... LIKE A BETRAYED PE... TURNS ON HIS FORMER MENTOR!

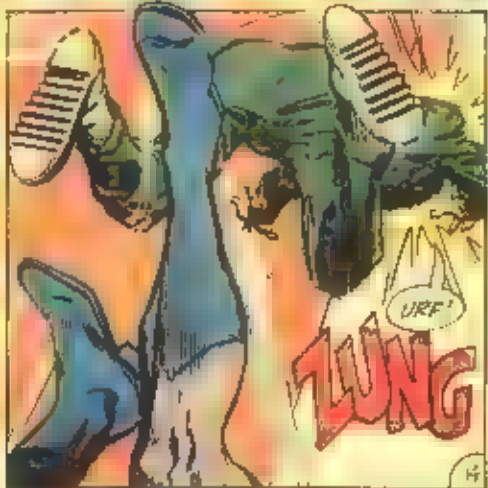
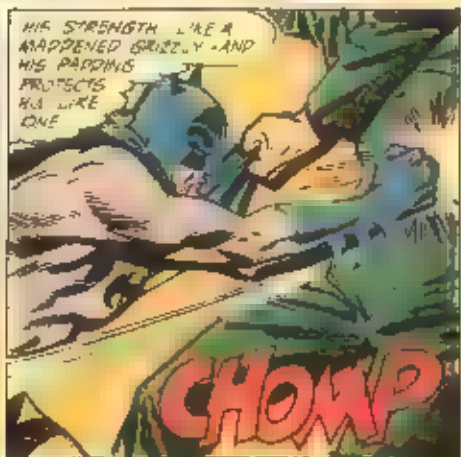


YOU HURT  
ME ILGA. I  
DON'T LIKE  
THAT!



YARRH!  
AND NOW  
FLEDERMENSCH--





His momentum unchecked as the secret door shuts upon



GATE CARRIES HIM TO A FITTING JURISMENT!

ACH-CH-NEIN!

BEFORE I COULD MOVE  
TO STOP IT THEY  
DESTROYED EACH OTHER  
ARE YOU PROUD OF  
WHAT YOU AC'D ON  
PUSHED USA ?

TOO LATE BE PROUD OF ANYTHING!  
I I AM TRYING

BUT - BEFORE  
I NOW DID  
YOU ESCAPE--  
KILLER-BATS?

"DURING WORLD  
WAR II, THE  
U.S. AIR FORCE  
WAS THE  
ONLY POWER  
WITH THE  
CAPABILITY  
TO DESTROY  
THE ENEMY'S  
AIR FORCE  
EFFECTIVELY  
AND  
WITHOUT  
SUFFERING  
LOSSES."



"I ACHIEVED THE SAME RESULTS WITH TORN UP  
PIECES OF FOOD-WRAPPING PAPER--THAT OTTO  
LEFT BEHIND! IN THE CONFUSION, I WAS FREE  
TO FIND A NARROW OPENING IN THE CAVE-ROOF...  
ENLARGED IT. THE REST YOU KNOW!"

I KNOW NOW  
WE NEVER COULD  
HAVE--BEATEN  
YOU

FOR THE SAME  
REASON THE "BEASTS"  
HAVE NEVER  
US--OUR STRENGTH  
IS IN OUR HUMANITY  
FOR OUR FELLOW-  
MEN!

THE  
END

STORY BY FRANK ROBBINS; ART BY IRV NOVICK & DICK GIORDANO

WE'VE HIT THE BULL-EYE!



ON SALE  
MAR 3



ON SALE  
FEB 26



# The FBI CRIME LABORATORY

NOWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD ARE CONCENTRATED SO MANY SCIENTISTS AND SO MUCH EQUIPMENT ENGAGED IN SCIENTIFIC CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION AS IN THE 40,000 SQUARE FEET OF THE FBI LABORATORY ON THE 7TH FLOOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUILDING IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



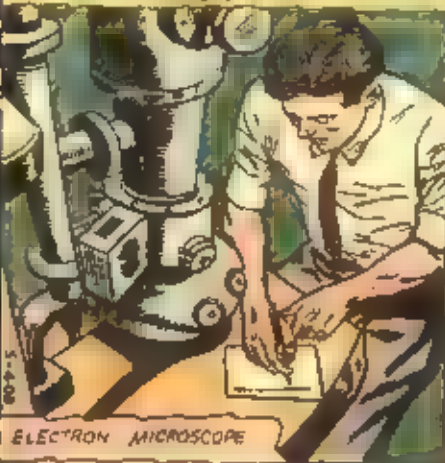
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

MORE THAN 700 TECHNICIANS, REPRESENTING PRACTICALLY ALL OF THE PHYSICAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, PORE OVER EVIDENCE DISCOVERED AT THE SCENE OF A CRIME.



FBI TECHNICIAN USES COMPARISON MICROSCOPE TO MATCH MARKINGS OF BULLET FROM SCENE OF CRIME WITH TEST BULLET FIRED FROM SUSPECT'S WEAPON

THE TOOLS USED BY THESE SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVES RANGE FROM A SMALL TWEEZER TO THE MIGHTY ELECTRON-MICROSCOPE, WHICH CAN MAGNIFY A TINY SPECIMEN OF EVIDENCE MORE THAN 300,000 TIMES.



ELECTRON MICROSCOPE

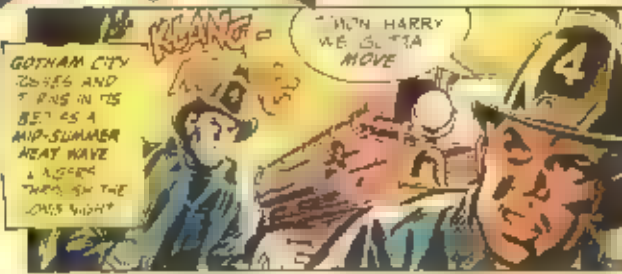
DURING THE COURSE OF A SINGLE YEAR (1963), ABOUT 235,000 SEPARATE SCIENTIFIC EXAMINATIONS WERE PERFORMED, ONE-FOURTH OF WHICH WERE DONE FREE OF CHARGE FOR AGENCIES OTHER THAN THE FBI (MOSTLY FOR LOCAL POLICE FORCES).



IN THE PETROGRAPHY UNIT OF THE FBI, SOIL IS REMOVED FROM A SUSPECT'S SHOES FOR MINERAL ANALYSIS.



# BATMAN



GOTHAM CITY  
20455 AND  
7 PMS IN ITS  
BED AS A  
MID-SUMMER  
HEAT WAVE  
LAGERS  
THROU' SW THE  
ONLY NIGHT

THESE MEN THOUGH WHEN I SLEEPING FOR THEIR 3 IS IN ADVENT  
THE VERY WALLS 4 10 8 10 FOUR SEASON 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2



## HOT TIME in GOTHAM TOWN TONIGHT!

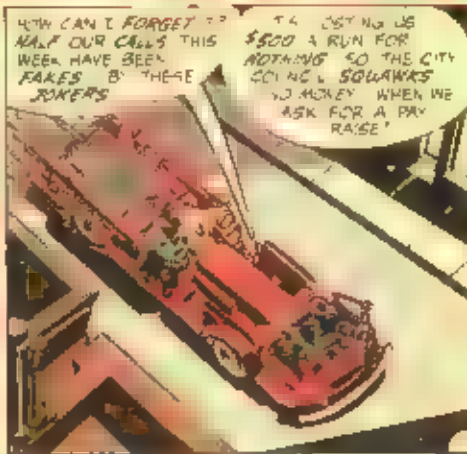
8.1  
SOMETHING  
THESE EYES  
DE FEEL  
UNNATURAL  
HUR 20 AND  
THEN  
2 2

STORY  
MIKE FEEBACH  
ART  
1978 31 74 200  
70 2 10 70



FALSE ALARM  
BLAST 2. AT  
THINK SOMETHING  
H 20 I 20 20 20

LAY OFF HARRY  
YOU WANT TO  
START A RIOT BY  
WAVING THEN  
ARRESTED AND IF  
WE TO GET TALKING  
THEM ALL YOU  
GET WITH 7 BE A  
M 4 GUE!  
JUST FORGET  
IT!



WHY CAN I FORGET 7  
HALF OUR CALLS THIS  
WEEK HAVE BEEN  
FAKES BY THESE  
JONERS

74 GETTING US  
\$500 A RUN FOR  
NOTHING SO THE CITY  
GOING SQUAWKS  
10 MONEY WHEN WE  
ASK FOR A PAY  
RAISE!

JUST THEN-

OLD BOY FROM  
A PRINCE COLLEGE  
DISTRICT TRAVEL  
OF ARTISTS  
AND THE 1934

HARRY  
THE - IN  
HOME  
CORNER

IF IT'S THOSE  
PUNKS AGAIN SO  
HELP ME

CUT IT OUT HARRY  
BROTHER JUST GET  
THE ARMY YESTERDAY  
HE'S BEEN YAPPING ABOUT  
THE WAR AND NOW I HAD  
TO SUFFER THROUGH YOU!

THIS ONE'S  
FOR REAL!

HOPE THAT  
FALSE ALARM DIDN'T  
DELAY US TOO LONG  
TO GET UNDER  
CONTROL

MY BABY SHE'S UP  
THERE TRAPPED!  
HEAVEN HELP  
HER.

GET THE AERIAL  
LADDER GOING  
I GOTTA GET  
UP THERE

LOOK!





MIGHTY LUNGS PUMP OUT. IN. OUT.  
FORCING LIFE GIVING AIR INTO A  
"TINY SMOKE FILLED CHEST"



NOW  
THAT'S GUY  
MAN

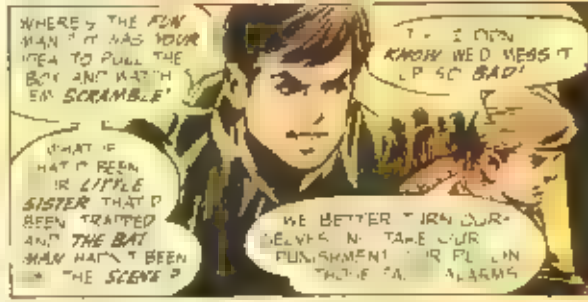


YOU'RE ALIVE  
THANK GOD  
YOU'RE  
ALIVE!



HEY CLEVE WHERE  
YOU HEADING?

LEAVE  
ME  
ALONE



WHERE'S THE FUN  
MAN? IT WAS YOUR  
IDEA TO PULL THE  
BOY AND KATH  
IN SCRAMBLE!

I - I DON  
KNOW WED MESS UP  
SO BAD!

WHAT IF  
HAT'D BEEN  
IR LITTLE  
SISTER THAT'D  
BEEN TRAPPED  
AND THE BAT  
MAN HAD'T BEEN  
THE SCENE?

WE BETTER TURN OUR  
BELT'S ON TAKE OUR  
PUNISHMENT FOR FLIN  
THOSE FA ALARMS



BUT A PRIVATE  
SESSION  
BUT A 75  
154" x 50  
KIND OF  
ANOTHER  
DISASTE

THOSE ANIMALS! THEIR DELAY  
ALMOST KILLED THAT KID  
WHY DOESN'T ANYONE TEACH  
THEM ANY RESPECT?

I AM I'M  
GETTING TIRED  
OF HEARING  
YOU RAP

OKAY OKAY  
UNLESS I'M A BIT  
SHORT TEMPERED  
TONIGHT





DETERMINED WILL AND INDIAN  
TABLE COURAGE COMING WITH  
MODERN MECHANICS AND THE  
BLAZE SLOWLY FLITERS  
CRACKLES AND PIES



# FLIN IS...



## PALISADES AMUSEMENT PARK N.J.

1/2 MILE SOUTH OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE



ALL COMICS IN MAY THROUGH OCTOBER HAVE THE **FREE COUPON!**



ADMIT ONE (1) TO  
**PALISADES**  
AMUSEMENT PARK  
ADMISSION **FREE** PARKING

GOOD MONDAY  
WEDNESDAY  
AND FRIDAYS

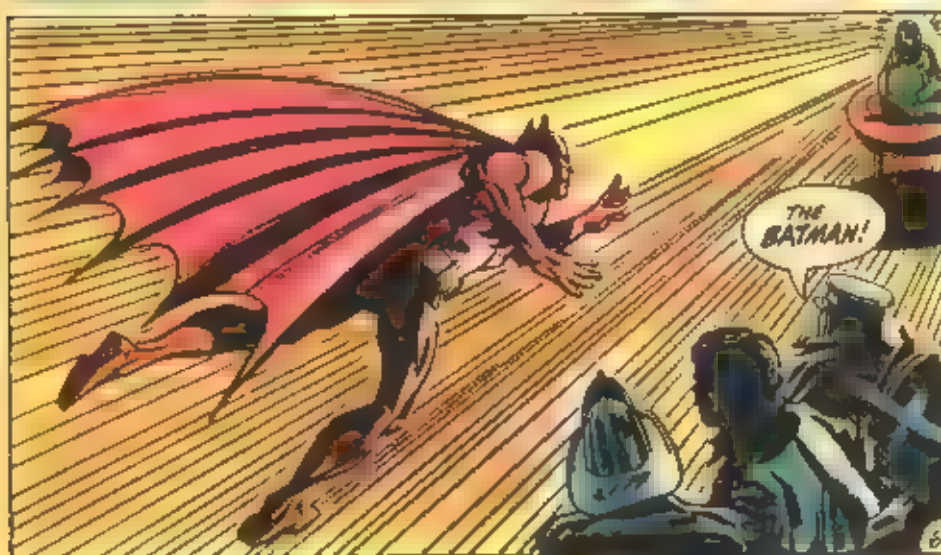
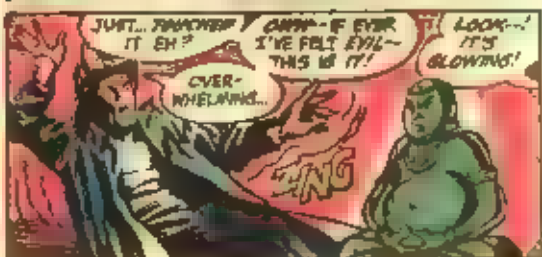
WORTH  
\$1.10

(EXCEPT  
HOLIDAYS)  
UNTIL 7 P.M.

Free Ride Free Ride   
**CAROUSEL WHIP**



"NEXT THING I KNEW, YOU FELLAS WERE HERE!"





BODIES OF STEEL FLY FEARLESSLY  
INTO THE BRINK OF THE UNKNOWN...



...AS THE IDOL'S EYES STAB OUT  
WITH SUPERNATURAL FORCE  
AT STAR-LIKE INTENSITY...



FIRST FIERY RED... THEN  
FLAMING YELLOW... FINALLY  
BLAZING BLUE-WHITE!



YET THE BATMAN GOES ON...

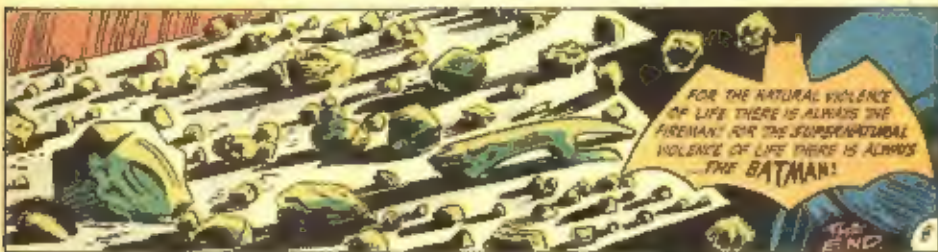
AND ON...

ARRRGGGHHH



AND ON!





*read...*  
**D.C.'s BEST**





# LETTERS to the BATCAVE

S-408

Dear Editor:

Thirty years and the ever-changing world of *Batman* moves on...

Purposely, I refrained from listening to the fanfiction grapevine on the "Big Change" due for comics' greatest hero. I wanted no hint as to how the stories and/or art would change. For when the December 1969 *Batman* appeared I wanted to see and read a fresh, new story without coming to some prior conclusion.

Thus the cover of this issue was a true masterpiece: No Robin; a weeping Alfred; a grim, determined *Batman*. That dynamic drawing of *Batman* by Neal Adams told me the editors at National were thrusting ahead with a bold, new presentation.

Opening the cover to page one—I received my first feeling of satisfaction. The team of Novick-Gordiano was handling the art. This is undoubtedly the best duo that ever rendered a *Batman* adventure. Storywise, Frank Robbins is the heart of the modern *Batman*. With this in mind, I entered into "One Bullet Too Many" eager to see if this was the end, or the beginning of *Batman*.

Twenty-three pages later I was relieved that the new editorial policy was never near the radical "Death of Alfred" type of story. Yet there was a vast departure from the *Batman* & Robin team I've loved so long. But anyone reading *Batman* in the last two years or so has seen the slow change taking place. Robin was out. *Batman* was a crime-fighter, a character of some realism, not a cardboard fighter of consumed clown.

Finally, Bruce Wayne is a living part of the *Batman* saga. Having him set up the Victims, Inc. Program is a most commendable venture on behalf of the Wayne Foundation. To think that all these years there has existed the great sixty-line possibilities of such an organization, to only now be brought into focus! The use of *Batman* thinking, superimposed with, or behind, Bruce Wayne in a panel lets the reader know *Batman* is there—even though he's not in costume.

It's been a long time since *Batman* stopped a bullet, and the one fault with the story was *Batman*'s ineptness with the single villain. However, stopping the bullet was necessary to the story. But I remind myself with panel 2, page 8 as Bruce states: "All big ambitious programs start small..." Thus, as the new cases tully up in the *Batman* casebook, I'm convinced *Batman*'s career has really only begun.

—BILL J. WHITE, Columbia, Mo.

(It is only fitting that the name of "Bilko" White, editor-publisher of *Batmania*, be signed to the lead-off letter of comment on the "Big Change in *Batman*!") The mail ran about 70% in favor, 30% disapproved, and 10% had both good-and-bad things to say about it.—Editor!

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Dear Editor:

Comic magazine editors must be a rare breed. Any one who can entice I-don't-know-how-many fans with little subtle reminders ("The Big Change is coming in

*Batman!* You've got to see it to believe it!") and then give us a perfectly mediocre mag like *Batman* #217, has to be!

"One Bullet Too Many" had one flaw too many—the biggest of which was that not one "change" came as a surprise. Robin's departure was previewed in the November *Detective Comics*, so that didn't come as a surprise; after all, a 30-year-old kid sidekick has to go to college sometime! It was a good move, yes, but not earth-shaking enough to be called a "Big Change!"

The phasing-out of Wayne Manor, the Batcave, the Batmobile, etc., was expected—things like that always seem to accompany "fond farewells". It's an unwritten rule in comicdom that whenever a super-hero loses his kid partner, he goes into a fit of nostalgia and depression, and promptly decides to cut all ties with the past—to "start a new life"! And, who's to say *Batman* should be any different?

The Wayne Foundation's new role in *Batman*'s life was unexpected, as was "Victims, Inc."; but that doesn't necessarily make it a good move. While the idea of the *Batman* prowling at night is newsworthy, and of Bruce Wayne operating in the daytime equally good, I can't say I like the connection between *Batman* and Bruce: "I have this friend who just happens to be a super-hero, and..." Come on, now! That went out with George Reaver's Clark Kent/Superman explanation! *Batman* should be more at home with the night, not friendly with anyone to any extent, and generally the *Batman* of 1939-1940. But then, mine is a lost and lonely voice...

So congratulations! This is another fine room you've gotten us into!

—ALAN BRENNERT, Haledon, N.J.

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Dear Editor:

If you expect me to explode in a frenzy of either enthusiasm or disgust over *Batman* #217, I'm afraid I must disappoint you. Strangely, I took the whole thing quite calmly. In order to give an opinion of any value in this, perhaps the biggest thing ever to hit the *Batman* magazine, I cannot allow emotion to overpower me. Actually, I can neither say I liked it or disliked it. Let us say this—it interests me!

Basically, "One Bullet Too Many" was masterfully written, as befits a Robbins script. He obviously gave the details of the plot a lot of thought before he committed them to paper and typewriter ink. Some of them have possibilities, while some I feel to be questionable as to their reason or existence.

There is the matter of Robin's elimination from the team, due to the graduation and enrollment in college of Dick Grayson. I like the idea somehow, but I am unsure as to why the decision was made to oust him. It does fit well with further developments, such as Bruce Wayne's residency in the city. This makes sense, for what better place for a crime-fighter to reside than in the heart of the very activities he has vowed to quell? But though he no longer has access to the Batcave, why must it cease to function alto-



either? There will come many a time when his crime-finder that have pulled him out of a thousand sticky situations will be needed to yank him out of another one. I concede the value of his ultra-quick wits, but he strikes me as kind of conceited to think he can do everything himself.

—GARY SKINNER, Columbus, Ohio

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Dear Editor:

What are the elements that make up *Batman*?

First, he is Bruce Wayne, a lonely man who lost his parents in his youth, who remains unmarried, who has only two true friends in the world; a compassionate man who understands the suffering of others through his own sufferings; a man of enormous strength of will, who has found this strength in trying to help others.

Second, he is a detective, with an ever-alert mind, always asking, searching, probing any detail for the possibility of a clue, a tool to use against his prey.

Third, he is a creature of the night; he is a figure of mystery who lashes out at criminals on their own grounds of fear and darkness—but with the strength of justice always behind him.

These elements, of course, have always been *Batman's* basic constitution. But somehow, over the years, *Batman* slipped out of his heritage and into the rank of super-heroes—those characters whose identities are not their human qualities, but their super-powers.

Finally, after years of searching for a new identity for *Batman*, we find again his original identity: one man—a fiercely aggressive individual, but one man none the less—devoting his entire being to others, that they make escape the sadness he has known.

I raise my hat to those gentlemen behind *Batman* #217: for this issue will surely become a classic that will change the course of comic magazines. *Batman* has finally been raised from the numberless ranks of super-heroes to the singular rank of hero. May he remain in this position.

—EDWARD BRODERICK, Arlington Hts., Ill.

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Dear Editor:

What are you doing? It took *Batman* about 26 years, exactly January 12th, 1966 (three historic years before *Broadway Joe* pitched the Jets to a 16-7 Super Bowl win) to win the fame it deserved. Then what do you do—destroy an image! Okay, so Dickie boy flew off in college; that's no reason to take away the *Batcave*. Wayne Manor, and the *Batmobile*! Okay, so maybe *Batman* finally discovered that the "sophisticated" criminal is dead—some of *Batman's* old image must live.

—DANN JAMROSE, Whiting, Ind.

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Dear Editor:

To quote the man from "Laugh-In": "Verry interesting!"

And by that I mean *Batman* #217.

So you've finally gotten rid of *Robin*! Well, it's about time! I've been reading *Batman* for about 10 years and have never felt that *Robin* belonged with *Batman*. Besides, junior partners are a hold-over from the '40's and '50's. I'm glad to see that after 15 years of foot-dragging you have followed the fashion.

There was another interesting aspect about this issue: that being a job for Bruce Wayne after 30 years as a lazy loafer.

Also—please eliminate completely the super-villains such as Joker, Penguin, Scarecrow.

Finally—you're a BIG HIT in the barracks here at the Naval Hospital Corps School.

—DAVID COX, Great Lakes, Ill.

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Dear Editor:

Having the Dynamic Duo separated is like having Popeye stop eating spinach. Will the *Teen Wonder* and the *Caped Crusader* get back together again? Man, I hope so!

—DONNIE PITCHFORD, Memphis, Tenn.

(*Batman* and *Robin WILL be back together again—at least for the next issue—along with Wayne Manor, the Batcave, and Batmobile...all necessary ingredients to help solve the tantalizing puzzle of whether a certain member of a world-famous rock-and-roll group is dead or alive!*—Editor)

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Dear Editor:

I predict that *Batman* #217 will bring more mail than practically any other *Batman* comic ever printed. I salute you for daring to make such a long-needed change. I won't scream and yell that it was the best *Batman* tale I ever read. It might have been at that, but I am one who likes to look at things calmly. Dick's graduation from high school to go to college was something I've been waiting for quite awhile now. I believe this will increase the popularity of *Batman* and *Robin*. Bruce and Alfred moving into the city was unexpected and pleasing. However, I believe the *Batmobile* should be kept close by—for emergencies and for going to JLA cases. I approve of the change 100%.

—ROGER SCHOOLCRAFT, Follansbee, W.Va.

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Dear Editor:

I'm going to miss it. The *Batcave*, that is. That immense, fantastic subterranean retreat of the *Batman* and *Robin*, reached only by a secret elevator and unobtainable to gangsterdom-at-large. Housing the secret crime-files and the blinking, buzzing computers... not to mention the sleek *Batplane*, the swift *Batboat* and the stream-lined *Batcopper*. And the *Batmobile*. That impressive, impregnable jet-turbine automobile with its headlights and baffles and its countless "new looks". I'm going to miss it.

Or am I? Bruce Wayne is now returning to the element that he should have been associated with all the time. Night in the big city. Ferreting out human vermin. Chasing down dark alleyways and onto slummy wharves. Appearing on a rooftop, silhouetted against a full moon, spreading the cape and "wings" of an immense, fearsome bat. Bruce Wayne... fighting as much crime and injustice without costume as with it. The Wayne Foundation... noble organization for truth and righteousness the world over. The *Batman*... discarding his expensive and familiar bar-junk to fight crime bare-handed, with only "the clothes on his back and the wits in his head"! Ye Editor... discarding a familiar format for the Real Old Look! the one that super-villains wounded in the late '40's and '50's and a TV comedy program finally killed in the '60's. The *Batman*... the '70's. *Batman* #217... Magnificent! This letter... finished!

—STEVE BEERY, Alma, Mich.

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